

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is MS4?

MS4 stand for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System.

(An MS4 community owns or operates a system for conveying stormwater such as pipes or ditches in an urban or urbanizing area.)

Who Runs the MS4 Program?

In NW Indiana, your local government, sewer utility, or county surveyor.

(MS4 is a federally mandated program to improve water quality. The state requires you community to comply with this rule.)

Why is it necessary?

To improve water quality.

(When it rains or snow melts, stormwater flows through pipes or ditches and drains untreated into lakes, rivers, and streams, carrying pollutants with it.)

How is the Program funded?

Your community must fund it locally through tax assessments and user fees.

(These may be shown on your tax, water, or sewer bills labeled as a "Stormwater Fee". There is NO state or federal funding for this mandate.)

What does the MS4 Program do?

Reduces water pollution from stormwater runoff.

(Through 6 required Minimum Control Measures detailed here.)

What specifically is my community required to do?

- I. Public Education & Outreach
 - a. Teach you the importance of cleaning up stormwater and the negative impact daily activities can have on lakes and streams.
- II. Public Participation and Involvement.
 - a. Include you in the development and implementation of the community MS4 Program.
- III. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination.
 - a. Identify and eliminate illegal discharges into the storm sewer system from homes and businesses.
- IV. Construction Site Run-off Control
 - a. Ensure that developers, builders, and others implement suitable plans to prevent sediment and pollutants from running off construction sites.
- V. Post-Construction Stormwater Management
 - a. Design long-term best management practices and control measures that reduce or eliminate polluted stormwater run-off from newly developed or redeveloped areas and make sure that they are maintained over time.
- VI. Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping at Municipal Operations.
 - a. Reduce stormwater pollution from local government facilities and activities such as road salting and pesticide use.